



Simple Solutions

for everyday ORGANIC™

A Few Tips for a Simple Life

by Michael Guilfoil, *The Spokesman-Review*

Organic farmer MaryJane Butters long ago embraced Thoreau's dictum to "simplify, simplify." As a Forest Service ranger in the 1970s, she spent two summers roaming Utah's Uinta Mountains with her home on her back. Later, she maintained the most remote wilderness ranger station in the Lower 48. Today, Butters and her family live eight miles outside Moscow on their farm, headquarters of her mail-order dry-foods business. But even e-commerce hasn't tempered Butters' enthusiasm for simplicity.

MaryJane's

2. Southwest Women's Fiber Arts Collective

SWFAC connects fiber artists with one another and with opportunities to sell work, learn skills, teach, and secure materials. They promote the concept of small, home-based cottage industry as a means of fostering economic self-sufficiency and artistic development for women working in the fiber arts. Outreach programming includes a week-long fiber arts camp for under-served youth, a knitting program for adults with developmental disabilities, and fiber day camps. They believe that by creating a networking structure, they improve the opportunities of fiber artists to gain skills and financial independence. www.fiberartscollective.org

3. Student Conservation Association

Our nation's young people are every bit as remarkable as the magnificent wild places we treasure. The Student Conservation Association provides high school students with opportunities to demonstrate their limitless potential while working to conserve natural resources. SCA offers hands-on internships and trail crew opportunities to teach kids about the importance of conservation. Students can make local contributions through community programs, and national crew members preserve trails and protect wildlife habitats. Supporting SCA helps ensure the health and integrity of our land. www.thesca.org

4. Rural Advancement Foundation International

RAFI works to support thriving, socially just, and environmentally sound family farms. RAFI is creating a movement among farm, environmental, and consumer groups to ensure that: family farmers can earn a fair and dependable income; agricultural workers are respected, protected, and valued by society; air, water, and soil are preserved for future generations; the land yields healthy and abundant food and fiber that is accessible to all members of society; and that the full diversity of seeds and breeds—the building blocks of agriculture—are reinvigorated and publicly protected. www.rafiusa.org

5. Heifer Project International, Inc.

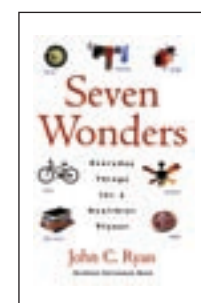
Heifer Project International is a humanitarian assistance organization that works to end world hunger and protect the earth's resources. Based on the simple idea of giving families a source of food rather than short-term relief, Heifer provides livestock and training in progressive agricultural practices, and they have helped 8.5 million families in more than 125 countries improve their quality of life and move toward greater self-reliance. Heifer helps build strong communities because each project participant agrees to "pass on the gift" of animal offspring, training, or skills to another family in need. www.heifer.org

6. American Rivers

Rivers are the lifelines that weave our landscape together, and most of us have a favorite—a river that holds a special place in our hearts, maybe a river we played in as children. Rivers sustain us body and soul, and American Rivers is the only national organization standing up for healthy waterways so our communities can thrive. Their work with grassroots watershed groups around the country is driven by what is best for rivers, and for the people and wildlife they support. www.americanrivers.org

7. Annie's Blankets

Annie's Blankets was inspired by one woman's visit to her veterinarian, where she saw an ailing dog resting comfortably on the floor, curled on a pink crocheted blanket. Edie Achterman realized how many pets and rescued wild animals need the temporary shelter of cozy bedding. Since 2006, she has collected over 28,000 blankets and towels (saving many from ending up in landfills) and delivered them to animal care facilities throughout the San Francisco Bay area. www.anniesblankets.org



In December 1999, a newspaper reporter from Washington called. He was writing a review of the book *Seven Wonders: Everyday Things for a Healthier Planet* by John C. Ryan. Michael Guilfoil of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper asked me if I had my own "seven wonders." The story that ensued was headlined

"Simple Solutions." Here, then, is the continuation of that story. Each issue of *MaryJanesFarm* will feature in detail new solutions, and will give you all the information you need to make them your own.

Solutions from previous issues are available on my website: www.maryjanesfarm.org



seven wonders

Seven Ways to Give

'Tis the season for generosity, and the spirit is catching. When others share their harvests, we get inspired to do the same. A wonderful thing to pass around, isn't it? If you'd like to donate a bit of your bounty to a worthy cause, here are seven wondrous ways to share.

1. Growing Home

Growing Home has harnessed the restorative power of organic agriculture to provide work for homeless and low-income individuals in Chicago. With the help of this amazing organization, wasted city spaces are now being "repurposed" as organic gardens that not only provide homegrown food, but also a sense of pride and purpose for the people who tend them. 100% of their proceeds are used to improve the program and pay for upkeep of farm sites. In addition to monetary donations, they can use farm and household equipment, office supplies, vehicles, and land for new gardens. www.growinghomeinc.org